

## **Avila Beach Drive – Ordinance No. 2702**

# **Analysis of Traffic Management Strategies and Options**

Prepared for the County of San Luis Obispo  
Department of Planning and Building

May, 2016

Prepared By:



**DI LEO & MORAN**

Community Planning | Environmental Services  
PO Box 6062 Los Osos, CA 93412 805.528.7868

---

## Contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Executive Summary .....	1
Purpose .....	1
Background.....	1
Changes Adopted Through Ordinance 2702 .....	7
Effect of Ordinance 2702 .....	21
Summary of Findings of the 2015 Avila Circulation Study .....	28
The Role of the Current Standard In the Development Review Process.....	31

## Figures

Figure 1 – Avila Beach Drive and the Avila Beach Urban Reserve Areas.....	2
Figure 2 – The Avila Circulation Study Area.....	3
Figure 3 – Ordinance No. 2702 Timeline.....	6
Figure 4 -- The Bob Jones Trail and Potential Shuttle Parking Locations .....	11
Figure 5 – Avila Beach In 1993 and 2015.....	22
Figure 6 – Port San Luis in 1993 and 2015 .....	23
Figure 7 -- Avila Valley Development in 1993 and 2011 .....	24
Figure 8 -- Limitations on the Use of Impact Fees .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## Tables

Table 1 -- Comparison of Dwelling Units, Estimated Population and Traffic Levels .....	21
Table 2 -- Estimate of Development Accommodated By The Remaining 25% Capacity On Avila Beach Drive .....	26

## **Executive Summary**

The standard for determining the level of service on Avila Beach Drive was adopted in 1994 by Ordinance No. 2702 based on non-summer weekday traffic measured during the second week of May. The standard was chosen primarily to address the impact of weekday commute trips associated with Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant and, by design, omits weekend and summer traffic. The origin, meaning and current status of the amendments enacted by Ordinance No. 2702 are discussed below, along with a summary of the 2015 Avila Circulation Study and Traffic Impact Fee Update.

## **Purpose**

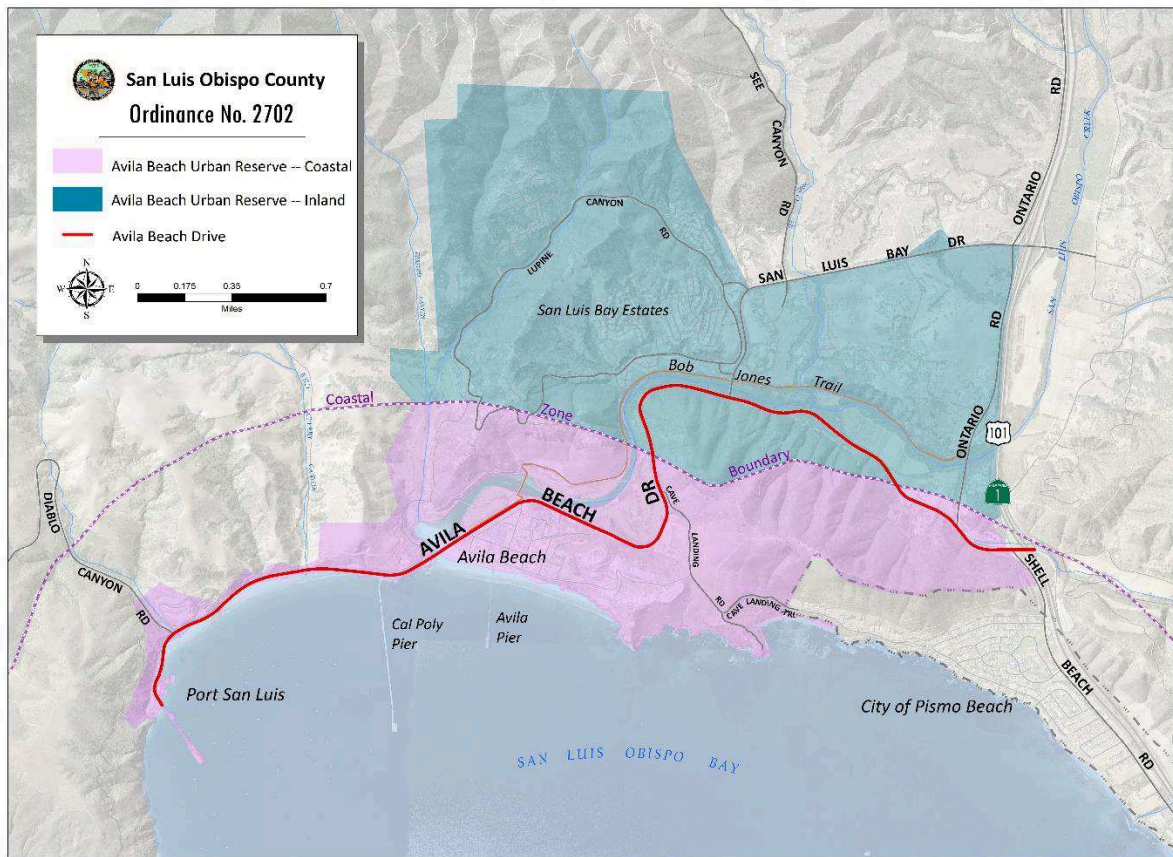
In 1994 the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance No. 2702 amending various sections of the San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal) with the goal of providing an equitable framework for managing the traffic capacity of Avila Beach Drive. These policies and standards have been in place for over twenty years, and the area served by Avila Beach Drive has undergone a number of significant changes. Moreover, the purpose and meaning of the adopted standards have faded from the collective memory. Accordingly, at the request of community members, the Board directed staff to re-visit the standards set forth by Ordinance 2702 with the goal of informing the public, stakeholders and decision-makers about its various provisions, and to determine whether they remain relevant in 2016.

## **Background**

Avila Beach Drive is a two lane, 4.5 mile long arterial that connects the 101 Freeway with the community of Avila Beach and Port San Luis. The road provides the only roadway into the Avila Beach area west of its intersection with San Luis Bay Drive (Figure 1). Avila Beach Drive serves a diverse range of stakeholders:

The community of Avila Beach	Port San Luis Harbor District
Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant	Beach visitors
Commercial and recreational fishermen	Avila Beach Resort and Golf Course
San Luis Bay Estates	Port San Luis Lighthouse
The Cal Poly Marine Sciences Pier	Other property interests.

Figure 1 – Avila Beach Drive and the Avila Beach Urban Reserve Areas

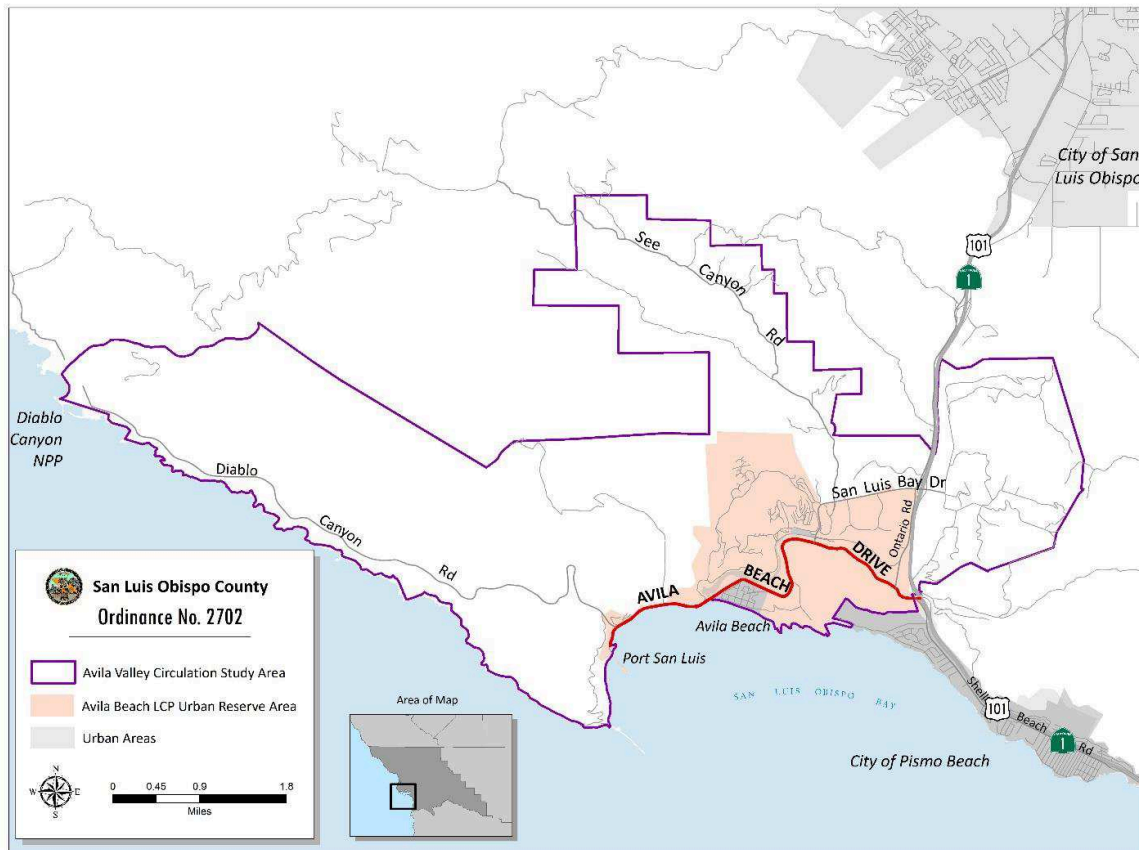


Traffic in the Avila Valley has been the subject of many studies over the years (a timeline is provided in Figure 3) as decision-makers have sought to balance the competing interests of the various stakeholders. In 1989, the Board of Supervisors initiated the first *Avila Circulation Study* (DKS Associates) to identify capital improvements and funding strategies for transportation improvements in the Avila Beach area (Figure 2). The 1989 study was also used as the basis for the County's Avila Road Improvement Fee Program.

The 1989 study recommended widening Avila Beach Drive to four lanes to accommodate existing and future traffic while maintaining LOS "C" which is the County's standard for roadways serving rural areas. Based on community input, it was subsequently decided that widening the road to four lanes would not be an acceptable solution due to environmental considerations. Consequently, the study was revised in 1990 and recommended a series of capacity enhancements for the county roads serving the Avila Valley plus several transportation management strategies, such as park and ride lots, public transit, bicycle facilities and parking management. The study also recommended changing the level of service standard to allow LOS "E" conditions over a portion of Avila Beach Drive during peak periods on summer weekends. The study indicated that *"This relaxation (of the standard) ... would not cause excessive delays to motorists if implemented in conjunction with a Transportation System Management (TSM) program"*. This recommendation was made in recognition of the fact that

LOS "C" could only be achieved by widening Avila Beach Drive to four lanes, even if all the recommended TSM and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures were fully implemented.

Figure 2 – The Avila Circulation Study Area



In the late 1980's, the Port San Luis Harbor District was pursuing a program for the development of its Harbor Terrace site to provide additional coastal-dependent and coastal-related uses in accordance with the Harbor Master Plan. Development at the Port is governed by the San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal) which contained a policy at the time entitled "*Port San Luis Service Capacity Improvements*" which functioned much the same way as the Resource Management System (RMS) does in other parts of the County. Namely, the policy established resource capacity limits relating to water, sewer, traffic and parking that applied to new development. The policy stated that:

*"Proposed development of projects and related improvements shall be within the circulation and utility capacity available to the Harbor area, or to be guaranteed through a planned program of improvements..."* and

*“Avila Beach Road (later renamed Avila Beach Drive) shall not be subjected to traffic levels exceeding Level of Service “C” overall, except that from Memorial Day to Labor Day LOS “D” may be experienced for periods.”*

The policy applied only to the Harbor District and not to any other development within the urban area. Because the level of service standard for Avila Beach Drive was already exceeded, the result of this policy was a de facto moratorium on new development at the Port. Lands outside the jurisdiction of the Port were not subject to these limitations and development could proceed in accordance with the other provisions of the San Luis Bay Area Plan. Moreover, the policy did not provide a threshold for triggering the implementation of strategies to avoid exceeding the LOS standard, as is the case for other areas of the county governed by the Resource Management System.

To remedy this situation, in 1991 the Port applied for an amendment to the San Luis Bay Area Plan so that development at the Port was subject to the same service capacity limitations for roads as development elsewhere in the Avila Beach Urban area. Prior to considering LCP amendment, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to conduct a Resource Capacity Study (RCS) for Avila Beach Drive to assess future traffic congestion levels and to estimate the potential effectiveness of various measures designed to mitigate the anticipated congestion. As part of this effort, the Board also authorized retention of a consultant (Wilbur Smith Associates) to provide technical information to inform the analysis. The RCS was completed in 1994 and made the following conclusions and recommendations:

- Public comment received during the course of the RCS indicated a general acceptance of the higher seasonal weekend traffic volumes, but a greater concern about weekday traffic - especially commuter traffic generated by the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant.
- The County should continue the developer fee program as the principal source of revenue for roadway improvements.
- A feasibility study should be initiated dealing with the collection of parking fees for on-street parking in the town of Avila Beach, as well as parking in the Harbor District parking lots at Port San Luis and Avila Beach. The study should include consideration of the location, operating strategy and funding of an intercept parking lot and shuttle system, and how the management of existing parking facilities could contribute to the success of such a system;
- Feasibility studies of a multi-modal circulation corridor parallel to Avila Beach Drive, including consideration of the former Pacific Coast Railroad right-of-way, should be continued.

Following consideration of the RCS, the Board directed the Department of Planning and Building to prepare revisions to the San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal) which were subsequently adopted as Ordinance No. 2702. At the heart of the changes enacted through Ordinance No. 2702 was a planning area standard establishing a revised basis for determining the level of service for Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive. Instead of using *summer weekend* peak hour traffic as the basis for calculating LOS, the new standard was based on *non-summer weekday* peak hour traffic. According to traffic counts taken throughout the year in 1991, the

peak traffic months on Avila Beach Drive were June, July, August and September. The highest traffic volumes for a non-summer month were recorded in the month of May. Therefore, the new standard is based on traffic counts taken during the second week of May. This date “captures” the highest non-summer traffic while addressing the primary concern expressed by the community (ie, weekday worker commute traffic). The higher summer weekend traffic volumes were regarded as a natural consequence of the public demand for coastal recreation. Adoption of this new standard for calculating level of service also allowed for additional incremental development at the Port, since under the new standard the calculated LOS improved to level “A” based on traffic counts taken in May, 1994.

In addition, a new circulation program<sup>1</sup> was added to the Area Plan which established a threshold traffic volume for Avila Beach Drive to be applied through the Resource Management System when roadway levels of service were within 25% of LOS “C”. Under this program the Board of Supervisors would be asked to consider the allocation of remaining roadway capacity on Avila Beach Drive among coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other land uses.

To summarize, Ordinance No. 2702 achieved the following objectives:

- Established a standard for Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive that more accurately reflected the concerns of the stakeholders at the time. Namely, that non-summer weekday traffic is more representative of day-to-day traffic conditions, and the increased traffic on weekends and during the summer is a natural consequence of the desirability of the Avila Beach area as a recreation destination.
- Identified a threshold traffic volume applied through the Resource Management System which would trigger consideration of the allocation of remaining roadway capacity on Avila Beach Drive among coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other land uses.
- Removed roadway capacity on Avila Beach Drive as an obstacle for continued development at the Port. Development at the Port would be subject to the same areawide planning area standard as the rest of the Avila Beach Urban Area.
- Added programs, and highlighted the Port’s intent to participate in Transportation Systems Management (TSM) and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures and to comply with the County’s impact fee ordinance.
- Extended the consideration of priority for coastal-dependent and coastal-related development to any development in the Avila Beach Urban Area, in addition to the Port.

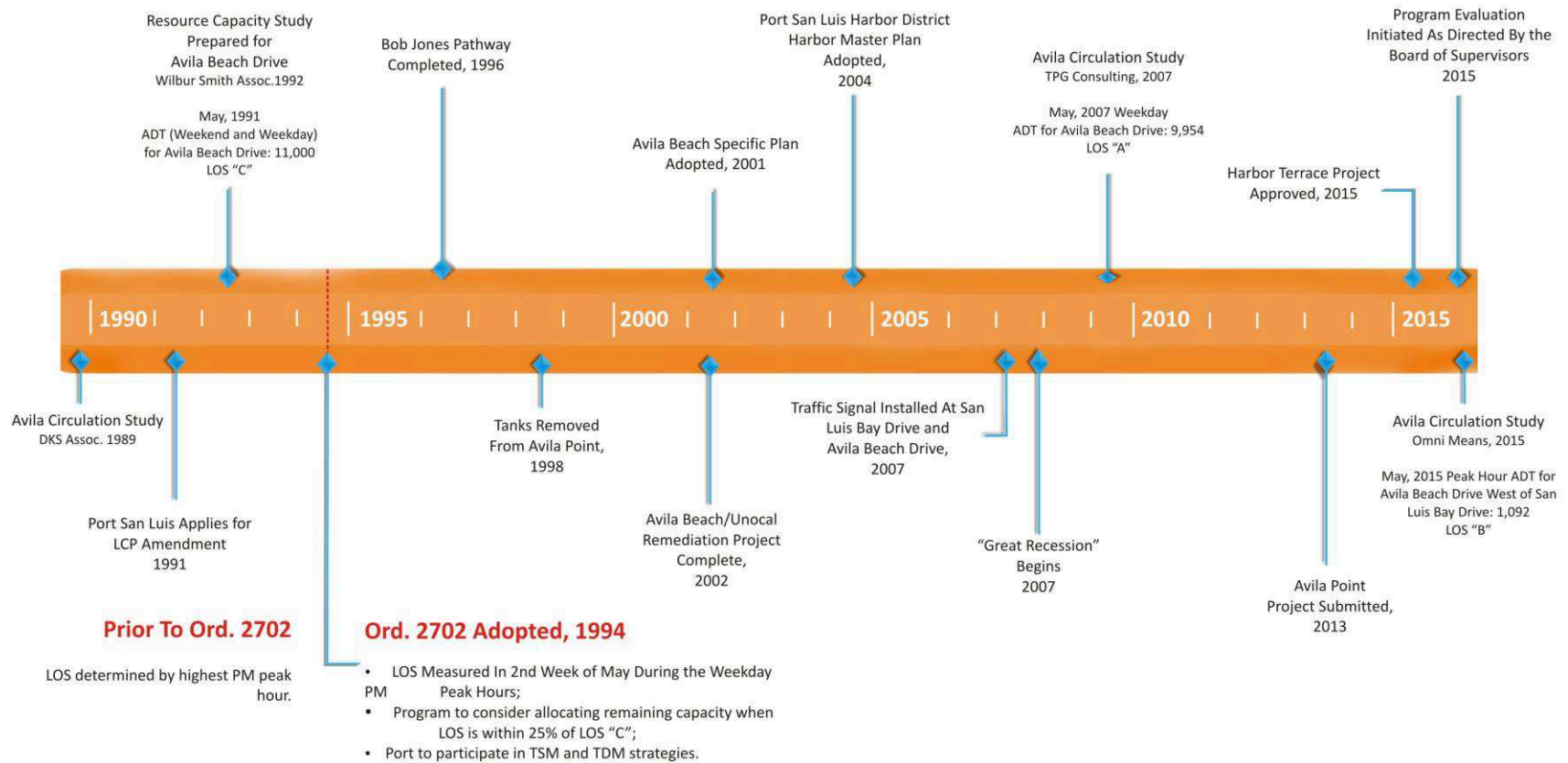
---

<sup>1</sup> Area Plans contain “planning area standards” which are mandatory requirements for development, and “programs” which are non-mandatory actions. Programs may be initiated by the communities, the county or other agencies in order to correct or improve local problems or conditions, and to otherwise help implement the goals and policies of the Area Plan. Since many recommended programs involve public expenditures, their initiation depends upon availability of funding.

---



Figure 3 – Ordinance No. 2702 Timeline





## Changes Adopted Through Ordinance 2702

The following section provides the text of the revised language in legislative format with strikeouts and italics. The purpose and intent of the revised language is also provided along with a brief discussion of how it is implemented (where relevant), its status in 2016, and its relation to other plans and programs.

### Coastal Plan Policies

The California Coastal Act of 1976 mandates that local governments prepare a land use plan and schedule of implementing actions to carry out the policies of the Coastal Act.

#### Coastal Plan Policies

##### Chapter 5. Commercial Fishing and Recreational Boating

**Traffic Analysis for Port Development.** Impacts to the circulation and utility systems serving the Port District would be minimal. Two main roads, San Luis Bay Drive and Avila Road together with Harford Drive, provide access to Avila Beach and Port San Luis from Coastal Highway 101. Avila Road is a two-lane winding road that follows San Luis Obispo Creek for about 4.5 miles to Port San Luis.

~~A preliminary~~ Analysis of the traffic generated by development in the community of Avila, Port San Luis, the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant and the surrounding rural areas has shown that the present capacity of Avila Road is ~~744~~ 1280 vehicles per hour, based upon Level of Service (LOS) "C" and ~~1,600 based on LOS "B"~~. During ~~September 1978~~ May 1994, a peak hour period of ~~1,412~~ 711 vehicles *per hour* was observed. ~~The traffic counts for the past eight years indicate an average annual increase in daily volume of approximately 375 vehicles in peak hour volume of 60 vehicles per hour.~~ *(Updated traffic volume information for Avila Beach Drive may be found in the Annual Resource Summary Report.)*

The limited improvements that the proposed harbor development envisions would not significantly impact the traffic capacity of Avila Road. The landfill site would provide for winter boat storage and visitor parking during the summer months. A breakwater is not included in the proposed development, thus no permanent slips could be provided. The maximum increase in moorings is estimated to be able to accommodate 100 additional boats. However, these would in many instances be boats that would have been trailered to the port for day use. From this analysis, ~~while existing and projected peak periods exceed LOS "C", however,~~ the port development would not significantly impact the load capacity. The report does identify, however, that a major expansion of the port facilities that could result if the construction of a breakwater were feasible in the future would substantially impact the capacity of Avila Road. A major expansion of the port would require an amendment to the Local Coastal Plan and the traffic impacts would be re-evaluated at that time.

### Purpose and Intent

Ordinance No. 2702 amended Chapter 5 of the County's Coastal Zone Policies relating to commercial fishing, recreational boating and port facilities primarily to address development at Port San Luis as contemplated by the Port's Harbor Master Plan. The text provides a summary of traffic conditions as they existed in 1994 and a brief assessment of impacts to Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive from continued development at the Port.

### Implementation

Coastal Plan Policies are implemented as planning area standards.

### Status in 2016

As with the other references to traffic counts taken in 1994, the traffic count data are out of date. The analysis of potential impacts to Avila Beach Drive from development at the Port is also out of date and has been superseded by revisions to the San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal) adopted in 2007 (Ordinance No. 3069) to incorporate the relevant provisions of the 2004 Port San Luis Harbor Master Plan, including development of the Harbor Terrace site.

### Relation to Other Plans, Programs and Ordinances

San Luis Bay Area Plan, Chapter 5. Resource Management, Part D. Roads and Circulation

#### **Coastal Plan Policies**

#### **Chapter 5. Commercial Fishing and Recreational Boating**

#### **Policy 4. Priorities for Development of Facilities and Allocation of Service Capacity**

#### **Priority III: Other Uses**

Other uses which are neither coastal-dependent or coastal-related. Priorities and policies of the California Coastal Act shall be considered in all harbor development. Prior to approval of any use which is not coastal-dependent the Harbor District shall make a finding that adequate resources and services have been reserved for all coastal dependent uses proposed in the Master Plan.

### Purpose and Intent

Policy 4 re-states and acknowledges the priorities of the Coastal Act for the allocation of service capacity among coastal dependent, coastal related and other uses at Port San Luis.

### Implementation

When new development is proposed at the Port, such as the Harbor Terrace project, the decision-making body must determine that adequate resources and services have been reserved for all coastal dependent uses proposed in the Master Plan. When the Port Master Plan was approved in 2004, it was determined that adequate resources are available for

buildout, including traffic generated by the Harbor Terrace project. This conclusion was based on the revised standard for Avila Beach Drive.

#### Status in 2016

Adequate resources continue to be available to the Port for buildout of the Port Master Plan, based on the existing LOS standard for Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive adopted by Ordinance No. 2702 in 1994.

#### Relation to Other Plans, Programs and Ordinances

Port San Luis Harbor Master Plan  
Port San Luis Code of Ordinances  
San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)

#### **Coastal Plan Policies**

#### **Chapter 5. Commercial Fishing and Recreational Boating**

#### **Policy 5: Port San Luis Service Capacity**

Proposed development of projects and related improvements shall be within the circulation and utility capacity available to the harbor area, or to be guaranteed through a planned program of improvements as specified in the Harbor Master Plan. These capacity limits are recognized for each service as follows:

- c. Traffic:** Avila Beach Road shall not be subjected to traffic levels exceeding level of service "C", ~~overall except that from Memorial Day to Labor Day LOS "D" may be experienced for periods based on the average hourly weekday two-way 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. traffic counts to be conducted during the second week in May of each year.~~

#### Purpose and Intent

Policy 5 requires new development at the Port to be within the circulation capacity available to the Port as required by Coastal Plan Policy 4 discussed above. The previous language acknowledged that summer traffic on Avila Beach Drive would be higher than other times of the year by allowing LOS "D" to be experienced "...for periods..." during the peak summer months. However, traffic counts taken in 1988 and 1992 found that the segment of Avila Beach Drive west of San Luis Bay Drive was already operating at LOS "E" and "F" during the summer and especially on summer weekends. Since the road was already over capacity, the previous language resulted in a de facto moratorium on development at the Port.

Note that the revised language still requires new development to be within the circulation and utility capacity available to the Port. The revised language for traffic retains the LOS "C" standard but establishes a specific non-summer weekday in May for measuring the level of service. When the revised standard was applied, Avila Beach Drive was found to be operating at LOS "B" or better and therefore had not yet reached the resource capacity limit for Port development.

### Implementation

The language of policy 5.c. is implemented by the Avila Beach Urban Area Standards contained in Chapter 8, Part B of the San Luis Bay Area Plan (discussed below). When new development is proposed at the Port, traffic impacts are assessed based on the LOS standard stated in the Coastal Plan Policies.

### Status in 2016

The port continues to apply this standard in CEQA documents for new development.

### Relation to Other Plans, Programs and Ordinances

Port San Luis 2004 Harbor Master Plan and Port San Luis Code of Ordinances  
San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)

### **San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)**

#### **San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)**

#### **Chapter 4 – Circulation, Part C. Planning Area Circulation Programs**

#### **Avila Beach**

**3. Avila Valley Transportation System Management (TSM) and Demand Management (TDM) Programs.** *The county should pursue TSM and TDM programs to increase capacity and reduce traffic volume on Avila Beach Drive, including:*

- a) Public transit system improvements;*
- b) Parking management;*
- c) Intercept parking and shuttle service; and*
- d) Establishment of bicycle routes.*

[This program is re-stated in the Avila Community Plan]

### Purpose and Intent

One way to “increase capacity” on Avila Beach Drive is to reduce the number of vehicles using the road by shifting the mode of travel to transit, bicycles and/or walking. This program was added to encourage the county to pursue strategies that encourage travelers to use modes of travel other than individual motor vehicles.

### Implementation

The County, in cooperation with transit providers, SLOCOG and other stakeholders, has pursued grant funding and other strategies to implement local and regional transit and bicycle plans.



### Status in 2016

The Bob Jones Trail (Figure 3) was constructed in 1996<sup>2</sup> and provides a Class I bicycle path and pedestrian walkway between Highway 101 and Avila Beach.

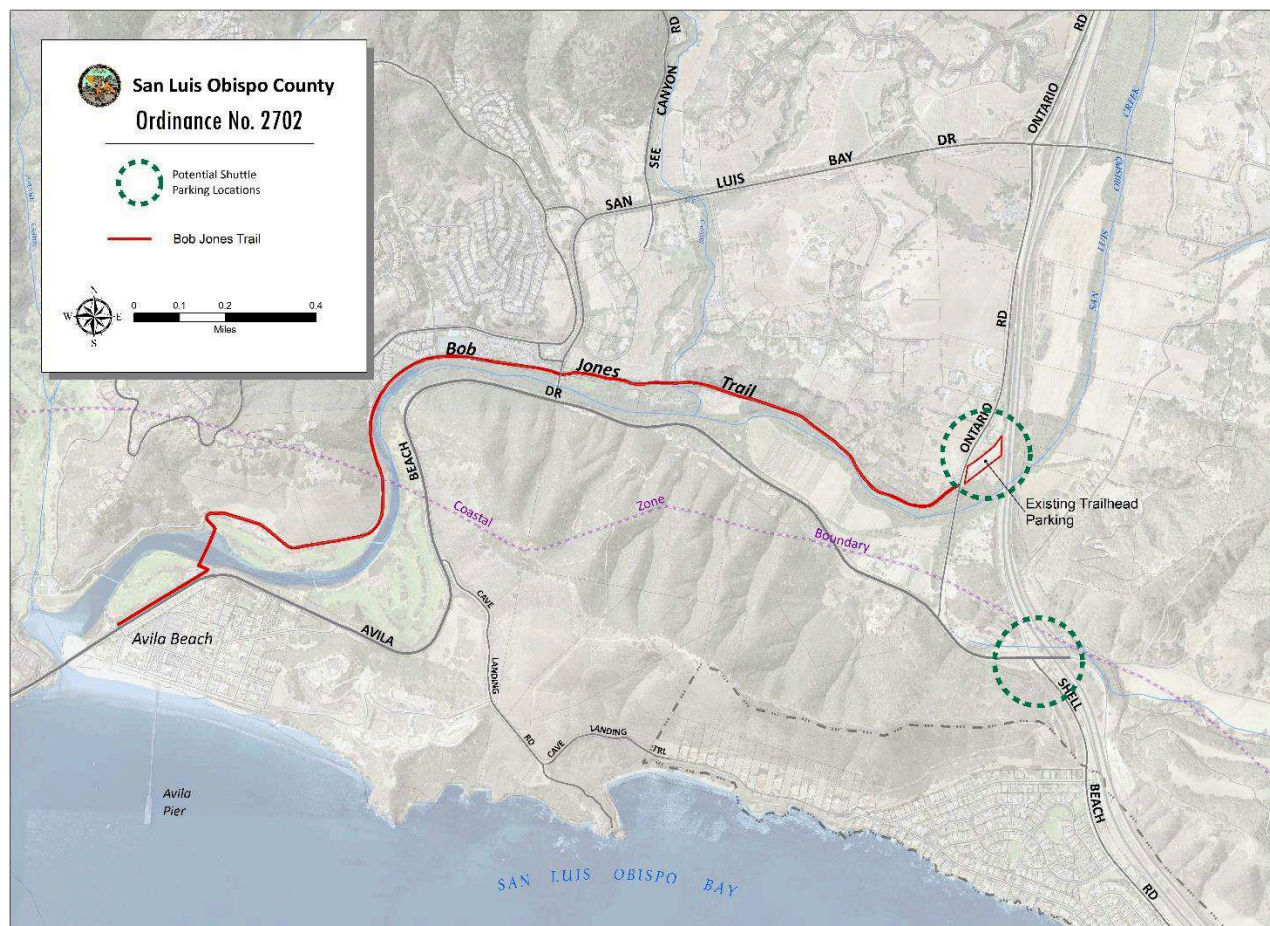
Intercept parking locations have been tentatively identified (Figure 3) and the cost of acquiring and improving intercept parking is included in the Capital Improvement Program.

The San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) provides the Beach Trolley, a free shuttle service between the Pismo Beach Premium Outlets Center and Port San Luis, Thursday-Sunday from the end of March through early October. There is no other regularly scheduled transit service to the Avila Beach area.

### Relation to Other Plans, Programs and Ordinances

2014 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy  
County Bikeways Plan  
South County Transit Plan

*Figure 4 -- The Bob Jones Trail and Potential Shuttle Parking Locations*



<sup>2</sup> The segment between Ontario Road and San Miguel Street was constructed in 1996. The segment between San Miguel Street and First Street was completed in 2011.

## **San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)**

### **Chapter 4. Circulation, Part C. Planning Area Circulation Programs**

#### **Avila Beach**

- 4. Resource Capacity - Avila Beach Drive.** *When annual traffic counts indicate that remaining excess capacity has declined to 25 percent of the LOS "C" ranges, the Board of Supervisors should be notified according to the procedures of the Resource Management System, and be asked to consider the allocation of the remaining capacity among coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other development. (Coastal dependent and coastal-related uses are defined in Chapter 8 of the San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal), Avila Beach Urban Area Standards, Public Facilities land use category.)*

#### Purpose and Intent

This program establishes a Level of Severity threshold for traffic capacity on Avila Beach Drive to be applied through the Resource Management System. When afternoon peak hour traffic volumes measured on Avila Beach Drive during the second week of May are within 25% of LOS "C", the Board of Supervisors will be notified through the RMS process and asked to consider allocating the remaining capacity in accordance with the priorities set forth in the Coastal Act.

#### Implementation

This program is implemented through the Resource Management System generally as shown in Figure 5. When ongoing monitoring indicates traffic volumes on Avila Beach Drive are within 25% of LOS "C" during the second week of May, an advisory memo would be prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Building alerting the Board of Supervisors. The Board would then deliberate as to whether allocation of the remaining 25% of LOS C was appropriate or not.

#### Status in 2016

As discussed above, LOS "C" for Avila Beach Drive will be reached when traffic volumes are between 1,250 – 1,450 trips during the weekday PM peak hour measured during the second week of May. As of 2016, traffic on Avila Beach Drive is nearing the 25% threshold.

#### Relation to Other Plans, Programs and Ordinances

Resource Management System

## **San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)**

### **Chapter 5. Resource Management, Part D. Roads and Circulation**

Avila Road Beach Drive from San Luis Bay Drive to the Avila Beach townsite is the only roadway in the planning area experiencing a definite capacity problem. *County policy acknowledges that there will be significantly higher peak hour traffic volumes on Avila Beach Drive during summer weekends than at other times of the year. In recognition of this condition, level of service calculations for Avila Beach Drive are based on non-summer weekday traffic volumes.* The present capacity of Avila Beach Road Drive is 744 1280 vehicles per hour, based on Level of Service (LOS) "C" operation. ~~and 1,600 vehicles per hour based on LOS "E" operation.~~ Recent *Traffic counts in 1994* have indicated a peak hour traffic volume as high as 1,451 of 711 vehicles (~~90% capacity~~) or 56% of LOS "C" capacity. *(Updated traffic volume information for Avila Beach Drive may be found in the Annual Resource Summary Report.)* In addition to increased vehicle traffic, bicycle traffic on Avila Road has increased to the point of creating an obstacle for motorists and a safety hazard for cyclists. A proposal to construct a separate bikeway along San Luis Obispo Creek would alleviate some of the problems but the project has been stalled indefinitely.

~~Based on present traffic characteristics and physical conditions, a Severity Level II deficiency appears to exist on Avila Beach Road.~~ In order to increase the traffic carrying capacity of the roadway, consideration should be given to installing left turn-lanes at the intersection of Avila Road and San Luis Bay Drive, and also at Avila Road and Cave Landing Road. Construction of a separate bikeway should also be undertaken as soon as possible. Implementation of a transit system from San Luis Obispo and Five-Cities areas could also help reduce peak hour congestion.

#### Purpose and Intent

Chapter 5 of the Area Plan addresses resource management which includes (among other things) roads and circulation. Ordinance No. 2702 added this text to the Resource Management chapter to provide some context for the management of traffic on Avila Beach Drive under the revised standards adopted in 1994. Note that the language acknowledges that there will be "...*significantly higher peak hour traffic volumes on Avila Beach Drive during summer weekends than at other times of the year.*" And that "*In recognition of this condition, level of service calculations for Avila Beach Drive are based on non-summer weekday traffic volumes.*"

#### Implementation

Traffic is managed by applying the LOS standard using non-summer weekday volumes.

#### Status in 2016

The information regarding traffic volumes is now out of date. As discussed above, current traffic volumes (May, 2015) on Avila Beach Drive are 924 weekday average hourly PM peak hour trips. In addition, the Bob Jones Pathway was completed in 1996. The Pathway provides a



separate Class I multi-use path between Ontario Road and Avila Beach that parallels San Luis Obispo Creek and Avila Beach Drive.

The San Luis Bay/Avila Beach Drive intersection was signalized in 2007.

Relation to Other Plans, Programs and Ordinances

San Luis Obispo Area Plan, San Luis Bay North Sub-area  
Coastal Plan Policies  
Avila Community Plan  
Avila Beach Specific Plan

**San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)**

**Chapter 6. Land Use, Avila Beach Urban Area Programs***Priority Coastal-Dependent and Coastal-Related Uses. Priorities and policies of the California Coastal Act and the San Luis Obispo County Local Coastal Plan shall be considered in reference to any development proposal in the Avila Beach Urban Area, which could impact traffic levels on Avila Beach Drive.*

Purpose and Intent

This program was added to extend the priorities for land use prescribed by the Coastal Act to the entire Avila Beach Urban Area when considering development proposals that would contribute traffic to Avila Beach Drive.

Implementation

When entitlements are processed for projects within the Avila Beach Urban Area that would contribute traffic to Avila Beach Drive, the decision-making body is asked to consider the project within the priorities and policies of the Coastal Act with respect to coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other uses. Coastal Act consistency is but one of many factors to be considered in approving new development.

Status in 2016

Ongoing as new development is processed.

Relation to Other Plans, Programs and Ordinances

San Luis Obispo Area Plan, San Luis Bay North Sub-area  
Coastal Plan Policies  
Avila Community Plan  
Avila Beach Specific Plan

**San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)****Chapter 8. Planning Area Standards, Part B. Avila Beach Urban Area Standards**

- 2. *Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive Level of Service.*** Reserve a portion of the Avila Beach Drive road capacity to serve coastal dependent uses and do not subject Avila Beach Drive to traffic levels exceeding Level of Service (LOS) “C” overall. The LOS for Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive shall be based on the average hourly weekday two-way 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. traffic counts to be conducted during the second week in May of each year. Fire access lane requirements will comply with the adopted fire code for the County of San Luis Obispo.

*Further, significant disruptions to the environmentally-sensitive habitat of San Luis Obispo Creek and its associated riparian habitat areas shall be avoided. Unavoidable impacts shall provide equivalent offset mitigation and enhancement measures.*

**Purpose and Intent**

The San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal) contains development “standards” that provide criteria for the detailed evaluation of development projects. Standards are mandatory. Ordinance No. 2702 added this standard to implement Coastal Plan Policy 5.c., discussed above. The standard for Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Drive applies to the portions of these roadways within the Avila Beach Urban Area (Figure 1).

The first sentence of the standard reflects Coastal Act priorities for the allocation of limited resources in the Coastal Zone. Coastal Dependent uses (those that depend directly on proximity to the beach or ocean) are given highest priority, and therefore limited resources (such as roadway capacity) should be reserved for those uses. The first sentence also re-states the standard for Avila Beach Drive established by Coastal Plan Policy 5.c. Level of Service “C” will be reached when the PM peak hour volume is between 1,250 – 1,450 trips.

The third sentence acknowledges that Avila Beach Drive is the only roadway into the Avila Beach area and a vital access route for emergency vehicles. For these reasons, access for emergency vehicles must be maintained.

Avila Beach Drive parallels San Luis Obispo Creek for much of its length. The last sentence acknowledges that any improvements to Avila Beach Drive to increase capacity must avoid or mitigate impacts to sensitive resources associated with the creek.

**Implementation**

The standard for determining LOS is implemented as follows:

- Traffic volumes are collected between the hours of 3PM to 6PM on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during the second week of May.

- The total number of trips during these hours are summed and divided by 9 to get the average number of trips per hour.
- The number of average hourly trips is compared with the hourly traffic volumes associated with LOS “C” (1,250 – 1,450 trips per hour). If the number of trips is equal to, or less than, 1,250 – 1,450, the roadway is operating at LOS “C” or better.

When traffic volumes are within 25% of LOS “C”, the Planning Area Circulation Program described in Chapter 4., Part C of the San Luis Bay Area Plan (discussed above) is applied.

#### Status in 2016

Based on traffic counts taken in September, 2015, traffic volumes on Avila Beach Drive are nearing LOS “C”.

#### Relation to Other Plans, Programs and Ordinances

Resource Management System

San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal), Chapter 4 – Circulation, Part C. Planning Area Circulation Programs

#### **San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)**

#### **Chapter 8. Planning Area Standards, Part B. Avila Beach Urban Area Standards**

- 6. *Permit Requirement - Port Facilities.*** *New development, including Aalterations to port facilities (other than those approved by coastal commission permits or on-going maintenance) shall require a Minor Use Permit, unless Development Plan approval is otherwise required by the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance (Title 23).*

#### Purpose and Intent

The revised language allows for the approval of new development at the Port through a Minor Use Permit unless a Development Plan is otherwise required.

## San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)

### Chapter 8. Planning Area Standards, 2. c. Port San Luis Service Capacity

- 3. Traffic:** Avila Beach Road shall not be subjected to traffic levels exceeding level of service "C", ~~overall except that from Memorial Day to Labor Day LOS "D" may be experienced for periods based on the average hourly weekday two-way 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. traffic counts to be conducted during the second week in May of each year. Any new program under Standard c. Improved Capacity Program below for expanding capacity or reducing traffic shall be the most feasible, least environmentally damaging alternative for the required change and shall be mitigated to the maximum extent feasible. Further, no substantial damage shall be allowed to the environmentally sensitive habitat of San Luis Creek, without equivalent offset mitigation or enhancement measures.~~

#### Purpose and Intent

The language of the Planning Area Standards relating to service capacity limitations to the Port were amended in 2004 when the goals and policies of the Port Master Plan were incorporated into the San Luis Bay Area Plan as follows:

2. *Service Capacity. Ensure proposed development of projects and related improvements are within the circulation and utility capacity available to the Harbor area or will be provided through a planned program of improvements. The following existing capacity limits are recognized for water and wastewater services, Avila Beach Drive road capacity, and parking:*
  - a. *Water. Usage shall not exceed the existing 100 acre-feet per year (AFY) available to the Harbor District from its Lopez entitlement. The District shall not sell or otherwise dispose of this entitlement to any users except lessees, concessionaires, or other Harbor uses. A 5-acre-foot per year reserve is desired. Water requirements for fire protection shall comply with the adopted fire code for the County of San Luis Obispo.*
  - b. *Wastewater. Wastewater generation shall not exceed available capacity owned by the Harbor District in the Avila Beach Community Services District wastewater treatment plant and/or other such facility as may be constructed to expand wastewater treatment capacity. The District shall not sell or otherwise dispose of this entitlement to any users except lessees, concessionaires, or other Harbor uses.*
  - c. *Parking. Maintain adequate parking to accommodate Harbor users and visitors. New development shall provide parking consistent with the County Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinances and the Avila Specific Plan.*
  - d. *Road Capacity. Please refer to Community-wide Standard #2*

The road capacity standard referenced in item d. is the standard for determining the LOS for Avila Beach Drive adopted by Ordinance No. 2702.

#### Relation to Other Plans, Programs and Ordinances

Port Master Plan

San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal), Chapter 4 – Circulation, Part C. Planning Area Circulation Programs

**San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)****Chapter 8. Planning Area Standards, 2. c. Port San Luis Service Capacity Improvements, Road Capacity**

(3) Road Capacity. The Harbor District will support coordinate with the transportation system management programs and related development fee ordinances adopted by the County for reduction of traffic impacts in the Avila Valley area. County through a formal memorandum of understanding which will provide as follows:

- ~~(a) The Harbor District and County will jointly determine the “reserved capacity” needed for adequate capacity for recreational trips in the Avila Beach Road/San Luis Bay Drive corridor. The concept of “reserved capacity” will assure that the sum of the following three components will not exceed the Level of Service of the roads as specified above 1) Existing area-wide non-recreational traffic; plus 2) Existing and future recreational trips (including that related to Port San Luis); plus 3) New non-recreational trips generated by new development either at the Port or other tributary areas. Consideration shall be given to work trip forecasts for Diablo Canyon Nuclear Generating Station, compared to previous levels.~~
- ~~(b) The District and County will jointly determine the impacts of cumulative proposed and potential development in the Avila Valley on the LOS “D” capacity, including the reserved recreational component, and a traffic management program to mitigate these impacts. This program shall address specific physical improvements to the road system, as necessary, including recommendations such as those identified above to widen a portion of Avila Beach Road. Bicycle paths, road improvements and other traffic management programs shall be considered. The most suitable alternatives would then be selected for study in Step (c).~~
- ~~(c) Preliminary route alignments and designs or transportation programs will be prepared. Based upon these designs, the costs of the preferred traffic management program will be estimated. It is know that costs for widening the most critical section of Avila Beach Road to four lanes would run between \$1.5-2 million, and that additional costs would be incurred to improve the intersection of San Luis Bay Drive and the bridge over San Luis Obispo Creek at the that intersection.~~
- ~~(d) A legal mechanism for assigning benefits and corresponding cost sharing formulas will be established. Alternatives include an assessment district, a zone of benefit of CSA No. 12, or a separate district. This issue also involves the problem of determining the appropriate timing of contributions for road improvements by the County, the Harbor District, and developers in the Avila Valley.~~
- ~~(e) The County and Harbor District will implement the memorandum of understanding to assure equitable contributions from each party to the traffic management program.~~

### Purpose and Intent

The detailed language of this section describes the process by which the County and the Port intended to manage traffic on Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive, and how the costs of improvements to these roadways would be shared. Under this language, the Port and the County would jointly determine the “reserved capacity” that would be available for recreational trips and for new development. The previous language also acknowledges the significant cost of widening Avila Beach Road (now Avila Beach Drive) to four lanes. Potential funding mechanisms for roadway improvements are also identified.

### Implementation/Status in 2016

The language describing the process for determining roadway capacity was revised by Ordinance No. 2702 which established a methodology based on weekday peak hour trips measured during the second week of May (discussed above under Chapter 8. Planning Area Standards, Part B. Avila Beach Urban Area Standards). Ordinance No. 2702 also established a revised methodology for reserving capacity for the Port through Program 4. Resource Capacity, discussed above under Chapter 4. Circulation, Part C. Planning Area Circulation Programs. Lastly, Ordinance No. 2702 included language stating that the Port will support the TSM and traffic fee programs adopted by the County to fund roadway improvements in the Avila Valley.

Since the adoption of Ordinance No. 2702, new development at the Port has been required to pay the applicable traffic impact fee and to participate in TSM measures.

### Relation to Other Plans, Programs and Ordinances

#### Resource Management System

San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal), Chapter 4 – Circulation, Part C. Planning Area Circulation Programs

## San Luis Obispo Area Plan, San Luis Bay North Sub-area

A portion of Avila Beach Drive serves areas outside the Coastal Zone governed by the San Luis Obispo Area Plan, San Luis Bay North Sub-area.

### San Luis Obispo Area Plan, San Luis Bay North Sub-area

#### Chapter 5. Circulation Element, Roadway Deficiencies in the San Luis Bay North Sub-area

*Avila Road Beach Drive* from San Luis Bay Drive to the Avila Beach townsite is the only roadway in the planning area experiencing a definite capacity problem. *County policy acknowledges that there will be significantly higher peak hour traffic volumes on Avila Beach Drive during summer weekends than at other times of the year. In recognition of this condition, level of service calculations for Avila Beach Drive are based on non-summer weekday traffic volumes.* The present capacity of Avila Beach Road Drive is 744 1280 vehicles per hour, based on Level of Service (LOS) "C" operation. ~~and 1,600 vehicles per hour based on LOS "E" operation.~~ Recent Traffic counts in 1994 have indicated a peak hour traffic volume as high as 1,451 of 711 vehicles ~~(90% capacity)~~ or 56% of LOS "C" capacity. *(Updated traffic volume information for Avila Beach Drive may be found in the Annual Resource Summary Report.)* In addition to increased vehicle traffic, bicycle traffic on Avila Road has increased to the point of creating an obstacle for motorists and a safety hazard for cyclists. A proposal to construct a separate bikeway along San Luis Obispo Creek would alleviate some of the problems but the project has been stalled indefinitely.

~~Based on present traffic characteristics and physical conditions, a Severity Level II deficiency appears to exist on Avila Beach Road.~~ In order to increase the traffic carrying capacity of the roadway, consideration should be given to installing left turn-lanes at the intersection of Avila Road and San Luis Bay Drive, and also at Avila Road and Cave Landing Road. Construction of a separate bikeway should also be undertaken as soon as possible. Implementation of a transit system from San Luis Obispo and Five-Cities areas could also help reduce peak hour congestion.

#### Purpose and Intent

This language mirrors the language from Chapter 5. Resource Management, Part D. Roads and Circulation, of San Luis Bay Area Plan (coastal) discussed above.



## Effect of Ordinance 2702

To provide a context for a discussion of “effectiveness”, it is useful to compare the circumstances that existed in the Avila Beach Urban Area (Figure 1) in the early 1990's and today, along with the changes that have occurred over that time. Table 1 compares the number of dwelling units, population, and traffic volumes in the Avila Circulation Study Area in 1992 and 2015. The average daily traffic and level of service for Avila Beach Drive are provided at the bottom of the table. As Table 1 shows, ADT and LOS measured on Avila Beach Drive have not increased significantly since 1992 even though the number of dwelling units and population has increased.

<b>Table 1 -- Comparison of Dwelling Units, Estimated Population and Traffic Levels In The Avila Circulation Study Traffic Impact Fee Area</b>			
<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>Buildout (2035)</b>
Dwelling Units <sup>1</sup>	879 <sup>2</sup>	1,221 <sup>3</sup>	1,388 <sup>3</sup>
Population	1,470 <sup>2</sup>	1,600 <sup>4</sup>	1,804 <sup>5</sup>
ADT for Avila Beach Drive	11,000 <sup>6</sup>	11,136 <sup>7</sup>	12,936 <sup>8</sup>
Level of Service for Avila Beach Drive <sup>9</sup>	C <sup>9</sup>	C <sup>10</sup>	C <sup>11</sup>

Notes:

1. Single Family, Multi-Family and Mobile Homes Combined
2. Source: 1990 US Census STF1
3. Source: Omni Means, Avila Beach Circulation Study and Traffic Impact Fee Update, 2015, Table 7
4. Source: 2010 US Census STF1 times
5. Based on 1.3 average number of persons per dwelling unit x 1,388 dwelling units.
6. Average Daily Traffic (weekdays and weekends) for the month of May, 1991 measured west of San Luis Bay Drive. (Source: Wilbur Smith Associates, 1992 Resource Capacity Study, Figure 1)
7. Average Daily Traffic (weekdays and weekends) for the Month of September, 2014 measured west of San Luis Bay Drive. (Source: Omni Means, Avila Beach Circulation Study and Traffic Impact Fee Update, 2015, Figure 3)
8. Average Daily Traffic for non-summer weekdays projected for the segment west of San Luis Bay Drive. (Source: Omni Means, Avila Beach Circulation Study and Traffic Impact Fee Update, 2015, Figure 8)
9. Based on two-lane arterial, two-way stop sign controls and no left turn lanes. (Source: Highway Capacity Manual Methodologies)
10. Based on two-lane arterial, traffic signal at San Luis Drive and left turn lanes. (Source: Highway Capacity Manual Methodologies)
11. Based on two-lane arterial, traffic signal at San Luis Drive and left turn lanes. (Source: Highway Capacity Manual Methodologies)

Figure 5 shows the community of Avila Beach in 1993 and 2015. Some significant changes:

- The Front Street area and surrounding blocks have been re-developed following the Unocal Remediation to include a new motel, several mixed-use buildings, a public park, and the Front Street Enhancement Plan.
- Infill residential development on properties north of San Luis Street.
- The Unocal Tank Farm has been closed.

*Figure 5 – Avila Beach In 1993 and 2015*

1993



2015

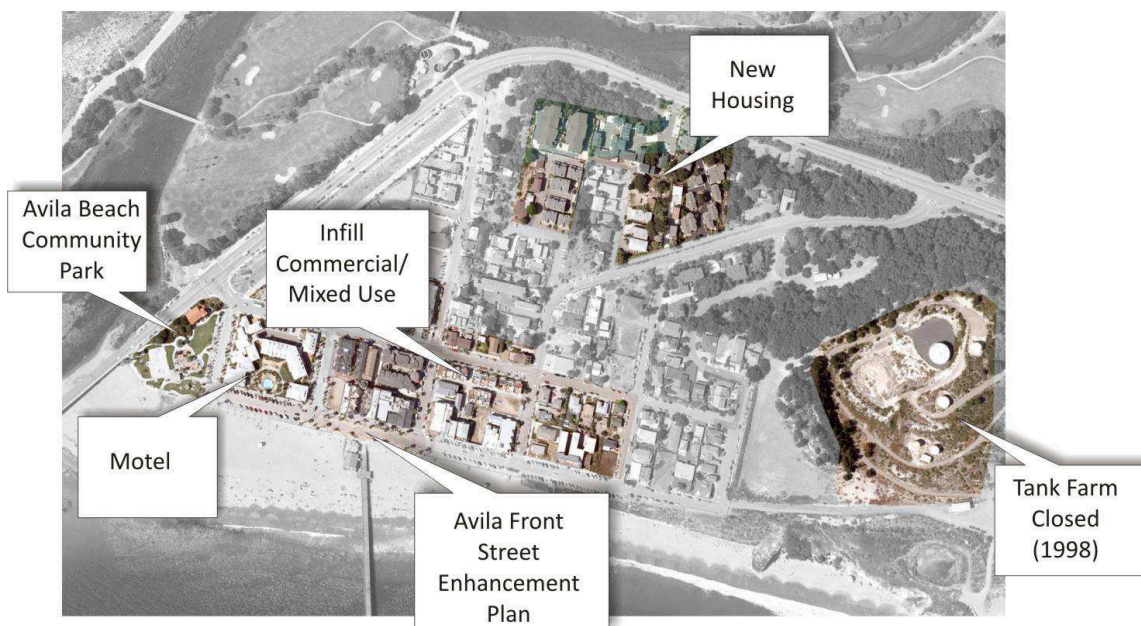
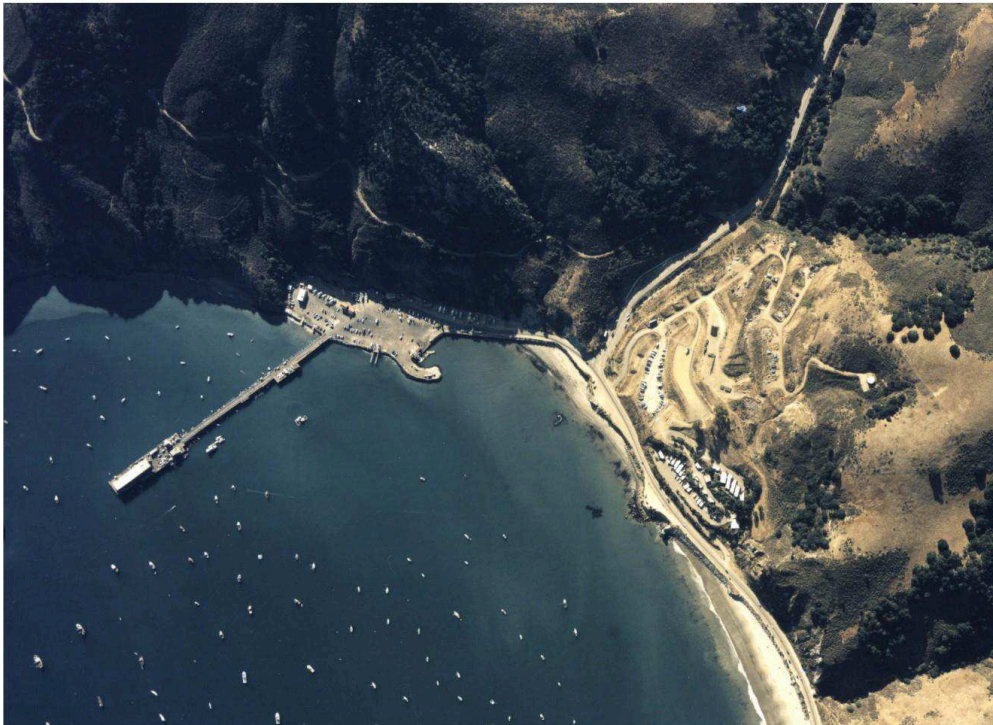




Figure 6 shows the Port San Luis area in 1993 and 2015. As Figure 7 shows, the area around the Port has not changed significantly since 1994. The Harbor Terrace site remains largely undeveloped and many of the trailers have been removed. A coastal development plan for the Harbor Terrace project was approved in 2015.

*Figure 6 – Port San Luis in 1993 and 2015*

1993



2015





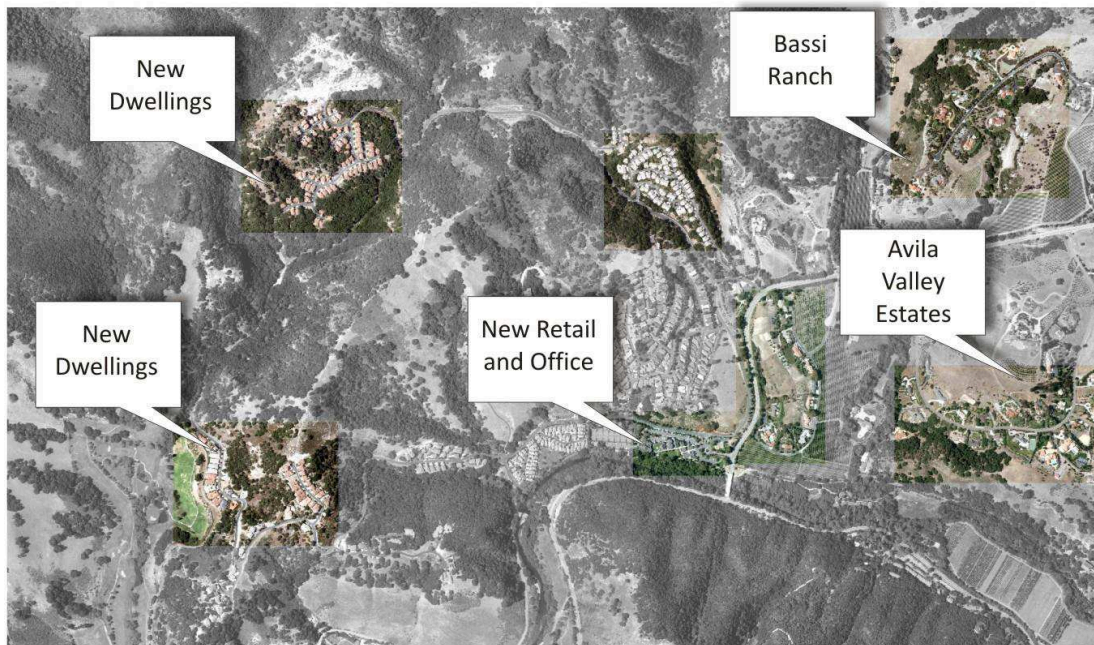
Figure 7 shows the Avila Valley area in 1993 and 2011. As Figure 9 there has been considerable residential development in the Avila Valley since 1993.

*Figure 7 -- Avila Valley Development in 1993 and 2011*

1993



2011



The following is a summary of the objectives of Ordinance No. 2702 along with a brief discussion of how they have effected traffic management in the Avila Beach area.

- *Remove the barrier to new development at Port San Luis associated with the available capacity of Avila Beach Drive. And,*
- *Establish a planning area standard for Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive that better reflects the concerns of the stakeholders at the time. Namely, that non-summer weekday traffic is more representative of day-to-day traffic conditions, and the increased traffic on weekends and during the summer is a natural consequence of the desirability of the Avila Beach area as a recreation destination.*

Changing the way in which the LOS for Avila Beach Drive is calculated “improved” the level of service from “E” to “B”, which in turn meant that the roadway could accommodate additional traffic before reaching the LOS “C” threshold. This effectively removed traffic as a resource capacity limitation to development at the Port. The revised standard also addresses the concerns of the stakeholders in 1994 in that it captures the daily commute traffic while avoiding the temporary peaks that occur during the summer and weekends. Conversely, the standard does not capture summer traffic or weekend traffic when the LOS can be as low as “E” or “F”.

In the years since the standard was adopted, the population and number of dwelling units served by Avila Beach Drive have increased by 28% and 8%, respectively (Table 1) while the level of service has remained around LOS “C”. The 2015 Avila Circulation Study found that traffic associated with buildout of the San Luis Bay Area Plan (including the Port’s Harbor Terrace project) could be accommodated by Avila Beach Drive while maintaining the LOS “C” standard. Again, this assumes the LOS is based on counts taken in the second week of May.

- *Add programs to the LCP documenting the Port’s intent to participate in Transportation Systems Management (TSM) and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures and to comply with the County’s impact fee ordinance.*

Since 1994, new development at the Port has been required to pay the County’s traffic impact fees. These fees have been used to (among other things) provide a left turn lane at Cave Landing Road and a stop light at San Luis Bay Drive.

- *Extend consideration of priority for coastal-dependent and coastal-related development to any development in the Avila Beach Urban Area, in addition to the Port.*

When new development is proposed in the Avila Valley with the potential to impact traffic on Avila Beach Drive, consideration is given to project consistency with the land use priorities of the Coastal Act.

- *Include an LCP program through which exceedance of a threshold traffic volume would trigger consideration of the allocation of remaining roadway capacity on Avila Beach Drive among coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other land uses.*

Ordinance No. 2702 added Circulation Program 4. to provide a process through which the Resource Management System would be triggered when the level of service on Avila Beach Drive approaches LOS "C". Under Program 4. when traffic measured on Avila Beach Drive is within 25% of LOS "C" the Board of Supervisors will be asked to consider allocating the remaining capacity among coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other uses. Determining how best to allocate the remaining capacity would likely consider such factors as:

- The trip generation characteristics of previously approved but undeveloped coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other land uses.
- The remaining unmet demand for coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other uses.
- The remaining development holding capacity of the Avila Beach Urban Area based on the land uses designated by the San Luis Bay Area Plan (coastal and inland).

For Avila Beach Drive, LOS "C" measured during the second week of May. Level of Service "C" will be reached when the PM peak hour volume is between 1,250 – 1,450 trips. If the mid-point of LOS "C" (1,350) is used, the 25% threshold corresponds to about 338 peak hour trips. Table 2 provides a comparison of the amount of development this represents, based on the PM peak hour trip generation rates of different coastal-dependent, coastal related and other land uses.

<b>Table 2 -- Estimate of Development Accommodated By The Remaining 25% Capacity On Avila Beach Drive</b>			
<b>Land Use Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>PM Peak Hour Trip Generation Rate<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Quantity<sup>2</sup></b>
Coastal-Dependent	Commercial fishing and related mariculture/aquaculture	1 trip per 1,000 sq.ft.	7.7 acres
	Sport fishing		
	Recreational boating and other oceanfront recreational uses		
	Energy-related facilities.		
Coastal Related	Retail	1 trip per 30 sq.ft.	10,140 sq. ft.
	Hotel	0.70 trips per occupied room	439 hotel rooms
	Restaurant	1 trip per 100 sq.ft.	33,800 sq. ft.
Other	Single Family Residential	1 trip per peak hour	338

Notes for Table 2:

1. Source: ITE Trip Generation Manual, 9th Edition 2012; CCTC 2014 (incorporated by reference). Assumes no reduction for the capture of pass-by trips.
2. Assumes all of the remaining capacity is devoted to a single land use type.

The consequences for allocating the remaining 25% of capacity on Avila Beach Drive among coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other land uses include:

- Helps ensure limited resources are available to serve the land use priorities of the Coastal Act.
- Measurement of the remaining capacity does not account for traffic fluctuations that may be the result of special circumstances. For example, the Amgen Tour of California passed through the Avila Beach area during a portion of the second week of May, 2015. As a result, the road was closed to vehicular traffic for a portion of the measurement period.
- Once the remaining capacity is consumed, additional development could not be accommodated on Avila Beach Drive while maintaining LOS "C" without some combination of capacity improvements and/or a reduction in traffic volumes. Additional development could be approved while making findings of overriding considerations for CEQA compliance. However, such development would not be consistent with the planning area standards of the San Luis Bay Area Plan (coastal).



## Summary of Findings of the 2015 Avila Circulation Study

The first Avila Circulation Study (ACS) was adopted in 1989 along with road improvement fees on new development. The ACS has been updated periodically since 1989 and most recently in 2015 (Omni Means, 2015 Avila Circulation Study and Traffic Fee Update). The boundaries of the area covered by the ACS are shown in Figure 2.

The 2015 ACS update accomplishes the following:

- Provides a summary of existing traffic conditions in the Avila Valley;
- Documents the information used by the travel demand model and how the model was calibrated;
- Models future (2035) conditions for roadways and intersections;
- Recommends improvements to the transportation system;
- Discusses alternate modes of transportation;
- Includes a capital improvement program and funding mechanisms, including re-calculated Transportation Impact Fees.

The 2015 ACS update was guided by the goals set forth by the Land Use Committee of the Avila Valley Advisory Council (AVAC) in 2009:

- Goal 1:** To provide an appropriate and efficient transportation system to serve the present and future needs of the Avila Valley and Port San Luis.
- Goal 2:** To ensure that special events in the Avila Valley provide adequate access management.
- Goal 3:** To expand the use of alternative forms of transportation in the Avila Valley
- Goal 4:** To ensure the transportation system accommodates buildout of the land uses designated by the San Luis Bay Area Plan, both Inland and Coastal portions.
- Goal 5:** To identify a framework for information sharing, coordination and implementation of transportation-related issues among stakeholders.

The 2015 ACS also serves as the fee justification study for the collection of transportation impact fees in accordance with Government Code Section 66000 et seq. (Assembly Bill 1600. New development is required to pay the appropriate fees for new or expanded public facilities commensurate with the type and size of development.

The following is a summary of the findings and recommendations of the 2015 ACS update:

- Consistent with San Luis Obispo County and Caltrans policies, LOS “C” was taken as the general threshold for acceptable/tolerable operations for rural areas, areas within Caltrans jurisdiction, and along Avila Beach Drive, and LOS “D” was taken as the general threshold for urban areas (Avila URL).
- Level of Service for Avila Beach Drive west of San Luis Bay Drive was calculated based on the average PM peak hour volumes measured during May 2015. The peak non-summer, weekday average daily traffic (ADT) measured on Avila Beach Drive west of

San Luis Bay Drive was 1,092 trips which corresponds to LOS “B”. All other roadways were found to be operating at LOS “A” during non-summer weekdays.

- All area intersections were operating at LOS “C” or better during non-summer PM peak hours, except the following:
  - Shell Beach Road/US 101 southbound offramp at Avila Beach Drive (LOS “D”)
  - Ontario Road and San Luis Bay Drive (LOS “D”)
  - US 101 northbound onramp/offramp at San Luis Bay Drive (LOS “E”)
- Between 2015 and 2035, the impact fee area (Figure 2) is expected to add 160 dwelling units, 12 acres of developed non-residential land uses, and 133 jobs. As a result, at buildout (2035), the peak hour roadway segment average daily traffic levels of service for non-summer weekdays for Avila Beach Drive west of San Luis Bay Drive is projected to be 1,305, which corresponds to Level of Service “D”.
- The following table shows the projected intersection levels of service for non-summer weekdays at buildout (2035):

Intersection	PM Peak Hour Level of Service	Warrant Met for Signalization?
1st St & Avila Beach Dr	C	--
San Miguel St & Avila Beach Dr	D	Yes
San Luis St & Avila Beach Dr	D	Yes
San Luis Bay Dr & Avila Beach Dr	C	--
Ontario Rd & Avila Beach Dr	F	Yes
Shell Beach Rd/101 SB Off Ramp & Avila Beach	F	Yes
US 101 SB On Ramp & Avila Beach Dr	N/A	N/A
Monte Rd/101 NB Off Ramp & Avila Beach Dr	A	--
See Canyon Rd & San Luis Bay Drive Dr	D	--
Ontario Rd & San Luis Bay Drive Dr	F	Yes
US 101 SB On/Off Ramp & San Luis Bay Dr	B	
US 101 NB On/Off Ramp & San Luis Bay Drive Dr	F	Yes

- In 2015, Cal Fire announced it would not sign off on any future large land developments in the Avila Beach area due to traffic congestion on Avila Beach Road and the lack of a secondary access road in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- The study identified the following transportation facility needs:
  - Avila Beach/US 101 Interchange – Provide additional capacity for ramps.
  - Avila Beach Drive/Ontario Road Intersection – Warrants satisfied for traffic signal.
  - San Luis Bay Drive Interchange Improvements – Warrants satisfied for traffic signal or roundabout.

- Avila Beach Drive/San Luis Street -- Warrants satisfied for traffic signal.
  - Avila Beach Drive/San Miguel Street -- -- Warrants satisfied for traffic signal.
  - Avila Beach Drive west of San Luis Bay Drive -- This roadway is projected to operate at deficient LOS "D" under build-out conditions. The PM peak hour volumes are heavy in the eastbound direction. Roadway improvements to widen Avila Beach Drive between San Luis Street and San Luis Bay Drive to two lanes eastbound are recommended.
- With the recommended improvements, all study area intersections are projected to operate at LOS "B" or better. With two east-bound travel lanes, Avila Beach Drive west of San Luis Bay Drive is projected to operate at LOS "A" during the peak hour.
  - The study recommends that the following transportation system management strategies be pursued:
    - Initiate direct bus service linking San Luis Obispo, Avila Beach, Pismo Beach
    - Implement intercept Park & Ride lots with shuttle service
    - Improve bicycle facilities and routes – Bob Jones Trail, bike lanes
    - Implement US 101 changeable message signs directing to intercept parking facilities
    - Implement a County permit process for all special events
    - Establish a parking district for Avila Beach for on-going improvements, or encourage the
    - Community Services District to include parking
  - The study recommends a capital improvement program with a total cost of \$13.9 million, which includes \$9.5 million in costs attributable to the impact fee program, and \$4.46 million in costs to be paid for by other sources. The study recommends a range of funding mechanisms including traffic impact fees.

## The Role of the Current Standard in the Development Review Process

### CEQA Compliance

When new development is proposed in the Avila Valley (or elsewhere in the County) it is subject to environmental review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of this review is to identify the potential adverse environmental consequences of the project as it relates to traffic and other issues. The County uses thresholds to determine the significance of environmental impacts under CEQA. For traffic, the County uses LOS “D” on roads serving urban areas, and LOC “C” for rural areas. However, unlike other roadways in the County, the threshold of significance/standard for acceptable operation for Avila Beach Drive is set by planning area standard No. 2 of the San Luis Bay Area Plan, Avila Beach Urban Area Standards:

**2. Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive Level of Service.** *Reserve a portion of the Avila Beach Drive road capacity to serve coastal dependent uses and do not subject Avila Beach Drive to traffic levels exceeding Level of Service (LOS) “C” overall. The LOS for Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive shall be based on the average hourly weekday two-way 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. traffic counts to be conducted during the second week in May of each year. Fire access lane requirements will comply with the adopted fire code for the County of San Luis Obispo. Further, significant disruptions to the environmentally-sensitive habitat of San Luis Obispo Creek and its associated riparian habitat areas shall be avoided. Unavoidable impacts shall provide equivalent offset mitigation and enhancement measures.*

As previously discussed, planning area standards are:

*“... mandatory requirements for development designed to handle special problems in a particular area of the county, or to respond to a special concern in an individual community.”*

And so the planning area standard described above is the standard by which the significance of traffic impacts to Avila Beach Drive are assessed through the CEQA process. The question arises as to whether the County can require a greater level of mitigation from a project to mitigate, for example, its impact on summer and weekend traffic. The answer is generally yes, but it would be difficult because:

- The standard of significance for traffic impacts to Avila Beach Drive is currently established by the mandatory standard of the Area Plan as described above. And
- It would be difficult to establish the nexus between the traffic generated by new development and the traffic impacts caused by beach and recreation traffic.

The nexus requirement arises from the fact that mitigation measures must be constitutional, meaning they must satisfy the standards established by relevant court cases relating to the proper exercise of discretion when conditioning development projects. For mitigation measures, these requirements are codified in the CEQA Guidelines as follows (emphasis provided):

**15126.4 CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION OF MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS.**

*(4) Mitigation measures must be consistent with all applicable constitutional requirements, including the following:*

*(A) There must be an essential nexus (i.e. connection) between the mitigation measure and a legitimate governmental interest. Nollan v. California Coastal Commission, 483 U.S. 825 (1987); and*

*(B) The mitigation measure must be “roughly proportional” to the impacts of the project. Dolan v. City of Tigard, 512 U.S. 374 (1994). Where the mitigation measure is an ad hoc exaction, it must be “roughly proportional” to the impacts of the project. Ehrlich v. City of Culver City (1996) 12 Cal.4th 854.*

By definition, new development has not contributed to the existing conditions associated with beach traffic. Therefore, it would be difficult to establish the required nexus for a mitigation measure designed to address this existing condition.

**Development Impact Fees**

For CEQA mitigation, new development is typically required to install the improvements (frontage improvements and street widening, etc.) necessary to achieve the adopted LOS standard. To mitigate cumulative and off-site impacts, a project is typically required to pay the adopted traffic impact fee. As discussed in the previous section, the Avila Circulation Study provides the factual justification for the collection of traffic impact fees from new development as allowed by the Government Code. The fee is charged to new development, only, and is used to pay a portion of the cost of constructing roadway improvements for the Avila Beach area necessary to achieve and maintain the desired level of service. In the case of Avila Beach Drive, the roadway improvements outlined in the Capital Improvement Program of the Avila Circulation Study are designed to achieve the adopted level of service as established by the planning area standard discussed above, based on the methodology for measuring the LOS of Avila Beach Drive.

## References

1990 US Census, Summary Tape File 1  
2010 US Census, Summary Tape File 1  
Avila Beach Community Plan, 1980  
Avila Beach Specific Plan, 2001  
Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance  
Department of Planning and Building, 1994, *Resource Capacity Study (RCS) for Avila Beach Drive*  
DKS Associates, 1989 *Avila Circulation Study*  
Omni Means, 2015, *Avila Circulation Study and Traffic Impact Fee Update*  
Ordinance No. 2702  
Pacific Institute, 2009 *The Impacts of Sea-Level Rise on the California Coast*  
Port San Luis Harbor District, 2004 Harbor Master Plan  
Port San Luis Harbor District, 2015 *Final Environmental Impact Report for the Port San Luis Harbor Terrace Development Plan*  
San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal)  
San Luis Obispo Area Plan, San Luis Bay Sub-region  
San Luis Obispo County Department of Public Works, 2015 *Avila Beach Drive Permanent Traffic County Station*  
Wilbur Smith Associates, 1992, *Resource Capacity Study for Avila Beach Drive*